# YOGA VASISHTA SARA

## (THE ESSENCE OF YOGA VASISHTA)

An English Translation from the Sanskrit Original


Sri Ramanasramam
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# PREFACE

This English version of the *Yoga Vasishta Sara* is based on a translation made by Swami Sureshananda, an old devotee of Bhagavan, who has founded an ashram named 'Vijnana Ramaneeyam' at Palghat and has translated several works of Bhagavan as well as the *Yoga Vasishta Sara* into Malayalam. This was published serially in *The Mountain Path*, the journal published by Sri Ramanasramam, during 1969 to 1971 and is now issued in the form of a book for facility of reference.

SRI RAMANASRAMAM — **V.S. RAMANAN**

15th July, 1973 — PRESIDENT

Guru-Poornima.

# INTRODUCTION

*The Brihat* (the great) *Yoga Vasishta* or *Yoga Vasishta Maha Ramayana* as it is also called, is a work of about 32,000 Sanskrit couplets, traditionally attributed to Valmiki, the author of Srimad Ramayana. It is a dialogue between Sage Vasishta and Sri Rama, during which *Advaita* (the doctrine of non-duality) in its pure form of *ajatavada* (theory of non-origination) is expounded, with illustrative stories in between. This vast work was abridged some centuries ago by Abhinanda Pandita, a Kashmiri scholar, into 6,000 couplets, which go by the name of *Laghu Yoga Vasishta*. This is a masterpiece in itself, like the original Brihat.

Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi used to refer to *Yoga Vasishta* frequently and has even incorporated six couplets from it in His *Supplement to Forty Verses* (verses 21 to 27).

A further condensation of this work was made long ago, by an unknown author, into about 230 couplets, divided into ten chapters, as *Yoga Vasishta Sara* (Essence of *Yoga Vasishta*), of which this translation is presented for

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*Note:* An English translation of the *Brihat Yoga Vasishta* by Vihari Lal Mitra is out of print. Translation of *Laghu Yoga Vasishta* by K. Narayanaswamy Iyer is available from the Theosophical Publishing House, Madras-20.

the first time. By making this condensation the author has rendered a great service to all sadhaks. This is indeed a goldmine fit for repeated reading and meditation.

**PUBLISHER**

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# YOGA VASISHTA SARA

## CHAPTER ONE

## DISPASSION

1. Salutations to that calm effulgence which is endless and unlimited by space, time etc., the pure consciousness which can be known by experience only.

2. Neither one who is totally ignorant nor one who knows it (*i.e.* Truth) is eligible to study this book. Only he who thinks 'I am bound; I must become free' is entitled to study it.

3. Until one is definitely blessed by the Supreme Lord he will not find either a proper Guru or the right scripture.

4. Just as a steady boat, O Rama, is obtained from a boatman, so also the method of crossing the ocean of samsara is learnt by associating with great souls.

5. The great remedy for the long-lasting disease of samsara is the enquiry, 'Who am I?, to whom does this samsara belong?,' which entirely cures it.

6. Not a day should be spent in a place which does not possess the tree of a wise knower of Truth with its good fruit and cool shade.

7. The sages are to be approached even if they do not teach. Even their talks in a light vein contain wisdom.

8. The company of sages converts emptiness into fullness, death into immortality and adversity into prosperity.

9. If sages were concerned solely with their own happiness with whom could those tormented by the sorrows of samsara seek refuge?

10. That which is imparted, O good soul, to a worthy disciple who has become dispassionate, is the real wisdom; it is the real purport of the sacred texts and is also the comprehensive wisdom.

11. Following the customary method of teaching is only for preserving the tradition. Pure awareness results solely from the clarity of the disciple's understanding.

12. The Lord cannot be seen with the help of the sacred texts or the Guru. The self is seen by the Self alone with the pure intellect.

13. All the arts acquired by men are lost by lack of practice, but this art of wisdom grows steadily once it rises.

14. Just as an ornament worn round the neck is considered lost through forgetfulness and is gained when

the mistake is realized, so also the Self is attained (when the delusion is removed) by the words of the Guru.

15. He is indeed an unfortunate person who, not knowing his own Self, takes pleasure in sense-objects, like one who realizes too late that the food eaten by him was poisonous.

16. That perverted man who, even after knowing that worldly objects are deceptive, still thinks of them, is an ass not a man.

17. Even the slightest thought immerses a man in sorrow; when devoid of all thoughts he enjoys imperishable bliss.

18. Just as we experience the delusion of hundreds of years in a dream lasting an hour, so also we experience the sport of maya in our waking state.

19. He is a happy man whose mind is inwardly cool and free from attachment and hatred and who looks upon this (world) like a mere spectator.

20. He who has understood well how to abandon all ideas of acceptance and rejection and who has realized the consciousness which is within the innermost heart — his life is illustrious.

21. On the dissolution of the body, the ether (consciousness) limited by the heart (*hridayam*) alone ceases to exist. People lament needlessly that the Self is extinct.

22. When pots, etc. are broken the space within them becomes unlimited. So also when bodies cease to exist the Self remains eternal and unattached.

23. *Nothing whatever is born or dies anywhere at any time. It is Brahman alone appearing illusorily in the form of the world.*

24. The Self is more extensive than space; it is pure, subtle, undecaying and auspicious. As such how could it be born and how can it die?

25. All this is the tranquil, One without beginning, middle or end, which cannot be said to be existent or non-existent. Know this and be happy.

26. O Rama, it is indeed nobler to wander begging about the streets of the outcasts (*chandalas*), an earthen bowl in hand, than to live a life steeped in ignorance.

27. Neither disease nor poison nor adversity nor any other thing in the world causes more suffering to men than such stupidity engendered in their bodies.

## CHAPTER TWO

# UNREALITY OF THE WORLD

1. Just as the great ocean of milk became still when the Mandara Mountain (with which it was churned by the Devas and the Asuras) became still, even so the illusion of samsara comes to an end when the mind is stilled.

2. Samsara rises when the mind becomes active and ceases when it is still. Still the mind, therefore, by controlling the breath and the latent desires (*vasanas*).

3. This worthless (*lit*. burnt out) samsara is born of one's imagination and vanishes in the absence of imagination. It is certain that it is absolutely unsubstantial.

4. The idea of a (live) snake in a picture of a snake ceases to be entertained when the truth is known. Similarly samsara ceases to exist (when the Truth is realized), even if it continues to appear.

5. This long-living ghost of a samsara which is the creation of the deluded mind of man and the cause of his sufferings disappears when one ponders over it.

6. O Rama, maya is such that it brings delight through its own destruction; its nature is inscrutable; it ceases to exist even while it is being observed.

7. Dear boy, wonderful indeed is this maya which deludes the entire world. It is on account of it that the Self is not perceived even though it pervades all the limbs of the body.

8. Whatever is seen does not truly exist. It is like the mythical city of *Gandharvas* (*fata morgana*) or a mirage.

9. That which is not seen, though within us, is called the eternal and indestructible Self.

10. Just as the trees on the bank of a lake are reflected in the water, so also all these varied objects are reflected in the vast mirror of our consciousness.

11. This creation, which is a mere play of consciousness, rises up, like the delusion of a snake in a rope (when there is ignorance) and comes to an end when there is right knowledge.

12. Even though bondage does not really exist, it becomes strong through desire for worldly enjoyments; when this desire subsides bondage becomes weak.

13. Like waves rising up from the ocean the unstable mind rises out of the vast and stable expanse of the Supreme Self.

14. It is because of that which always, of its own accord, imagines (everything) quickly and freely that this magical show (of the world) is projected in the waking state.

15. This world, though unreal, appears to exist and is the cause of life-long suffering to an ignorant

person, just as a (non-existent) ghost (is the cause of fear) to a boy.

16. One who has no idea of gold sees only the bracelet. He does not at all have the idea that it is merely gold.

17. Similarly towns, houses, mountains, serpents, etc. are all in the eyes of the ignorant man, separate objects. From the absolute point of view; this objective (world) is the subject (the Self) itself; it is not separate (from the Self).

18. The world is full of misery to an ignorant man and full of bliss to a wise man. The world is dark to a blind man and bright to one who has eyes.

19. The bliss of a man of discrimination, who has rejected samsara and discarded all mental concepts, constantly increases.

20. Like clouds which suddenly appear in a clear sky and as suddenly dissolve, the entire universe (appears) in the Self and (dissolves in it).

21. He who reckons the rays as non-different from the sun and realizes that they are the sun itself is stated to be *nirvikalpa* (the undifferentiating man).

22. Just as the cloth, when investigated, is seen to be nothing but thread, so also this world, when enquired into, is (seen to be) merely the Self.

23. This fascinating world rises like a wave in the ambrosial ocean of consciousness and dissolves in it. How

then can it be different from it (*i.e.* consciousness) in the middle (*i.e.* when it appears)?

24. Just as the foam, the waves, the dew and the bubbles are not different from water, even so this world which has come out of the Self is not different from the Self.

25. Just as a tree consisting of fruits, leaves, creepers, flowers, branches, twigs and roots, exists in the seed of the tree, even so this manifest world exists in Brahman.

26. Just as the pot (ultimately) goes back to mud, waves into water and ornaments into gold, so also this world which has come out of the Self (ultimately) goes back to the Self.

27. The snake appears when one does not recognise the rope; it disappears when one recognises the rope. Even so this world appears when the Self is not recognised; it disappears when the Self is recognised.

28. It is only our forgetfulness of the invisible Self which causes the world to appear just as (the ignorance of the) rope (causes the) snake to appear.

29. Just as the dream becomes unreal in the waking state and the waking state in the dream, so also death becomes unreal in birth and birth in death.

30. All these are thus neither real nor unreal. They are the effect of delusion, mere impressions arising out of some past experiences.

CHAPTER THREE

# THE MARKS OF A LIBERATED PERSON (*JIVAN MUKTA*)

1. The knowledge of the Self is the fire that burns up the dry grass of desire. This indeed is what is called samadhi, not mere abstention from speech.

2. He who realizes that the whole universe is really nothing but consciousness and remains quite calm is protected by the armour of Brahman; he is happy.

3. The yogi who has attained the state which is beyond everything and remains always cool as the full moon is truly the Supreme Lord.

4. He who reflects in his innermost heart upon the purport of the *Upanishads* dealing with Brahman and is not moved by joy and sorrow, is not tormented by samsara.

5. Just as birds and beasts do not take shelter on a mountain on fire, so also evil (thoughts) never occur to a knower of Brahman.

6. Wise men also, like foolish men, (occasionally) make others angry, (but they do so only) in order to test

their ability to control their innate feelings (that is to say to see how far the anger of other persons will affect them).

7. Just as the trembling (of the body) caused by the (imaginary) snake persists (for some time) even after realising that there is no snake, so also the effect of delusion persists (for some time) even after getting rid of all delusions.

8. Just as a crystal is not stained by what is reflected in it, so also a knower of truth is not really affected by the result of his acts.

9. Even while he is intent on outward actions (the knower of Truth) always remains introverted and extremely calm like one asleep.

10. Firmly convinced of non-duality and enjoying perfect mental peace, yogis go about their work seeing the world as if it were a dream.

11. Let death come to him (the knower of truth) today or at the end of aeons; he remains untarnished like gold buried in mire.

12. He may cast off his body at Kashi or in the house of an outcaste (*lit*. one who cooks dog's flesh). He, the desireless one, is liberated at the very moment he attains knowledge (of Brahman).

13. To one who is desireless, the earth, O Rama, is (as insignificant as) the hoof-print of a cow, Mount Meru, a mound, space as much as contained in a casket and the three worlds a blade of grass.

14. Like an empty vessel in space (the knower of Truth) is empty both within and without, while at the same time he is full within and without like a vessel immersed in the ocean.

15. He who neither likes nor dislikes the objects seen by him and who acts (in the world) like one asleep, is said to be a liberated person.

16. He who is free from the knots (of desires) and whose doubts have been set at rest is liberated even when he is in the body (*jivan mukta*). Although he may seem to be bound, he is free. He remains like a lamp in a picture.

17. He who has easily (*lit.* as if in sport) cast off all his egoistic tendencies and has abandoned even the object of meditation, is said to be liberated even when he is in the body.

18. He who does not, like one blind, recognise (*lit.* leaves far behind) his relatives, who dreads attachment as he would a serpent, who looks upon sense-enjoyments and diseases alike, who disregards the company of women as he would a blade of grass and who finds no distinction between a friend and a foe, experiences happiness in this world and the next.

19. He who casts away from his mind all objects of perception and, attaining perfect quiescence, remains still as space, unaffected by sorrow, is a liberated man; he is the Supreme Lord.

20. The noble-hearted man whose desires of the heart have come to an end is a liberated man; it does not matter whether he does or does not practise meditation or perform action.

21. The idea of Self in the non-Self is bondage. Abandonment of it is liberation. There is neither bondage nor liberation for the ever-free Self.

22. If, by perceiving that the objects of perception do not really exist, the mind is completely freed (from those objects) there ensues the supreme bliss of liberation.

23. Abandonment of all latent tendencies is said to be the best (*i.e.* real) liberation by the wise; that is also the faultless method (of attaining liberation).

24. Liberation is not on the other side of the sky, nor is it in the nether world, nor on the earth; the extinction of the mind resulting from the eradication of all desires is regarded as liberation.

25. O Rama, there is no intellect, no nescience, no mind and no individual soul (*jiva*). They are all imagined in Brahman.

26. To one who is established in what is infinite, pure consciousness, bliss and unqualified non-duality, where is the question of bondage or liberation, seeing that there is no second entity?

27. O Rama, the mind has, by its own activity, bound itself; when it is calm it is free.

CHAPTER FOUR

# DISSOLUTION OF THE MIND

1. Consciousness which is undivided imagines to itself desirable objects and runs after them. It is then known as the mind.

2. From this omnipresent and omnipotent Supreme Lord arose, like ripples in water, the power of imagining separate objects.

3. Just as fire born out of wind (fanned into a flame) is extinguished by the same wind, so also that which is born of imagination is destroyed by imagination itself.

4. The mind has come into existence through this (imagination) on account of forgetfulness. Like the experience of one's own death in a dream it ceases to exist when scrutinised.

5. The idea of Self in what is not the Self is due to incorrect understanding. The idea of reality in what is unreal, O Rama, know that to be the mind (*chittam*).

6. 'This is he', 'I am this', 'That is mine', such (ideas) constitute the mind; it disappears when one ponders over these false ideas.

7. It is the nature of the mind to accept certain things and to reject others; this is bondage, nothing else.

8. The mind is the creator of the world, the mind is the individual (*purusha*); only that which is done by the mind is regarded as done, not that which is done by the body. The arm with which one embraces the wife is the very arm with which one embraces the daughter.

9. The mind is the cause of (*i.e.* produces) the objects of perception. The three worlds depend upon it. When it is dissolved the world is also dissolved. It is to be cured (*i.e.* purified) with effort.

10. The mind is bound by the latent impressions (*vasanas*). When there are no impressions it is free. Therefore, O Rama, bring about quickly, through discrimination, the state in which there are no impressions.

11. Just as a streak of cloud stains (*i.e.* appears to stain) the moon or a blotch of ink a lime-plastered wall, so also the evil spirit of desire stains the inner man.

12. O Rama, he who, with in-turned mind, offers all the three worlds, like dried-grass, as an oblation in the fire of knowledge, becomes free from the illusions of the mind.

13. When one knows the real truth about acceptance and rejection and does not think of anything but abides in himself, abandoning everything, (his) mind does not come into existence.

14. The mind is terrible (*ghoram*) in the waking state, gentle (*santam*) in the dream state, dull (*mudham*) in deep sleep and dead when not in any of these three states.

15. Just as the powder of the *kataka* seed, after precipitating the dirt in water, becomes merged in the water, so also the mind (after removing all impressions) itself becomes merged (in the Self).

16. The mind is samsara; the mind is also said to be bondage; the body is activated by the mind just as a tree is shaken by the wind.

17. Conquer your mind first, by pressing the palm with the palm, grinding the teeth with the teeth and twisting the limbs with the limbs.

18. Does not the fool feel ashamed to move about in the world as he pleases and talk about meditation when he is not able to conquer even the mind?

19. The only god to be conquered is the mind. Its conquest leads to the attainment of everything. Without its conquest all other efforts are fruitless.

20. To be unperturbed is the foundation of blessedness (*Sri*). One attains liberation by it. To human beings even the conquest of the three worlds, without the conquest of the mind, is as insignificant as a blade of grass.

21. Association with the wise, abandonment of latent impressions, self-enquiry, control of breathing — these are the means of conquering the mind.

22. To one who is shod with leather the earth is as good as covered with leather. Even so to the mind which is full (*i.e.* undivided) the world overflows with nectar.

23. The mind becomes bound by thinking 'I am not Brahman'; it becomes completely released by thinking 'I am Brahman'.

24. When the mind is abandoned (*i.e.* dissolves), everything that is dual or single is dissolved. What remains after that is the Supreme Brahman, peaceful, eternal and free from misery.

25. There is nothing to equal the supreme joy felt by a person of pure mind who has attained the state of pure consciousness and overcome death.

CHAPTER FIVE

# THE DESTRUCTION OF LATENT IMPRESSIONS

1. O Rama, this enquiry into the Self of the nature or 'Who am I?' is the fire which burns up the seeds of the evil tree which is the mind.

2. Just as the wind does not affect the creepers in a picture, so also afflictions do not affect one whose understanding is fortified by firmness and (always) reflected in the mirror of enquiry.

3. The knowers of truth declare that enquiry into the truth of the Self is knowledge. What is to be known is contained in it like sweetness in milk.

4. To one who has realized the Self by enquiry Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are objects of compassion.

5. To one who is fond of enquiring (constantly), 'What is this vast universe?' and 'Who am I?' this world becomes quite unreal.

6. Just as in a mirage the idea of water does not occur to one who knows (that it is a mirage), even so latent impressions do not rise in one whose ignorance has been destroyed by realizing that everything is Brahman.

7. By the abandonment of latent impressions or by the control of breathing, mind ceases to be the mind. Practise whichever you like.

8. O pure soul, cherish the association of sages and the true scriptures; you will attain the state of Supreme Consciousness not in the course of months but days.

9. Latent impressions cease to be active when one associates with sages, discards all thoughts of samsara and remembers that the body has to die.

10. O Raghava, even ignorant persons convert, by the firmness of their conviction, poison into nectar and nectar into poison.

11. When this body is taken to be real it serves the purpose of a body, but when it is seen to be unreal it becomes like space (*i.e.* unsubstantial).

12. O Rama, while lying on a soft bed you wander about in all directions with a dream body; but now (in this waking state) where is that body?

13. Just as a respectable man avoids contact with an outcast woman carrying dog's flesh, so also one should discard the thought 'I-am-the-body', even if everything were to be lost.

14. When the aspirant (*sadhu*) thinks only of Brahman and remains calm and free from sorrows his egoity dies of itself.

15. If one realizes the unity of things everywhere, one always remains tranquil, inwardly cool and pure like space without the sense of 'I'.

16. If inwardly one is cool the whole world will be cool, but if inwardly one is hot (*i.e.* agitated) the whole world will be a burning mass.

CHAPTER SIX

# MEDITATION ON THE SELF

1. I, the pure, stainless and infinite Consciousness beyond maya, look upon this body in action like the body of another.

2. The mind, the intellect, the senses, etc. are all the play of Consciousness. They are unreal and seem to exist only due to lack of insight.

3. Unmoved by adversity, a friend of all the world in prosperity, without ideas of existence and non-existence, I live free from misery.

4. Inactive am I, desireless, clear as the sky, free from hankering, tranquil, formless, everlasting and unmoving.

5. I have now clearly understood that the five elements, the three worlds and I myself are pure Consciousness.

6. I am above everything; I am present everywhere; I am like space; I am that which (really) exists; I am unable to say anything beyond this.

7. Let imaginary waves of universe rise or fall in me who am the ocean of infinite Consciousness; there is no increase or decrease in me.

8. How wonderful that in me, the infinite ocean of consciousness, waves of *jivas* (individual souls) rise, sport for a while and disappear according to their nature.

9. The world which has come into existence on account of my ignorance has dissolved likewise in me. I now directly experience the world as supreme bliss of consciousness.

10. I prostrate to myself who am within all beings, the ever-free Self abiding as inner Consciousness.

CHAPTER SEVEN

# METHOD OF PURIFICATION

1. O Raghava, be outwardly active but inwardly inactive, outwardly a doer but inwardly a non-doer, and thus play your part in the world.

2. O Raghava, abandon all desires inwardly, be free from attachments and latent impressions, do everything outwardly and thus play your part in the world.

3. O Raghava, adopt a comprehensive view, characterised by the abandonment of all objects of contemplation, live in your innate Self, liberated even while alive (*jivan-mukta*), and thus play your part in the world.

4. Burn the forest of duality with the fire of the conviction, 'I am the one pure Consciousness' and remain happy.

5. You are bound firmly on all sides by the idea, I am the body'. Cut that bond by the sword of knowledge 'I am Consciousness' and be happy.

6. Discarding the attachment to non-Self, regarding the world as a partless (whole), concentrated and with attention turned inward, remain as pure Consciousness.

7. Remain always as pure Consciousness which is your constant (*i.e.* true) nature beyond the states of waking, dream and deep sleep.

8. O mighty-armed, be always free from mental concepts like the heart of a rock though not insentient like it.

9. Do not be that which is understood, nor the one who understands. Abandon all concepts and remain what you are.

10. Eliminate one concept by another and the mind by the mind and abide in the Self. Is this so difficult, O holy man?

11. Sever the mind, which has on account of its cares become red hot, with the mind which is like iron sharpened by the study of scriptures.

12. O Raghava, what have you to do with this inert and dumb body? Why do you feel helpless and miserable by joys and sorrows on account of it?

13. What a vast difference between the flesh, blood, etc. (composing the body) and you, the embodiment of consciousness! Even after knowing this why do you not abandon the idea of Self in this body?

14. The mere knowledge that this body is like a piece of wood or a clod of earth enables one to realize the Supreme Self.

15. How strange that, while the real Brahman is forgotten by men, the unreal called *avidya* (nescience) appears very real to them (*lit*. struts about before them).

16. It is again strange that while the Supreme Brahman is forgotten by men, the idea 'this is mine' called *avidya* is firmly held by them (*lit*. strongly confronts them).

17. When you do your work do it without attachment even as a crystal which reflects the objects before it (but is not affected by them).

18. The conviction that everything is Brahman leads one to Liberation. Therefore reject entirely the idea of duality which is ignorance. Reject it entirely.

CHAPTER EIGHT

# WORSHIP OF THE SELF

1. If you separate yourself from the body and abide at ease in Consciousness you will become one (the sole Reality), everything else appearing (insignificant) like grass.

2. After knowing that by which you know this (world) turn the mind inward and then you will see clearly (*i.e.* realize) the effulgence of the Self.

3. O Raghava, that by which you recognise sound, taste, form and smell, know that as your Self, the Supreme Brahman, the Lord of lords.

4. O Raghava, that in which beings vibrate, that which creates them, know that Self to be your real Self.

5. After rejecting, through reasoning, all that can be known as 'non-truth' what remains as pure Consciousness — regard that as your real Self.

6. Knowledge is not separate from you and that which is known is not separate from knowledge. Hence there is nothing other than the Self, nothing separate (from it).

7. 'All that Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Indra and others always do is done by me, the embodiment of Consciousness' — think in this manner.

8. 'I am the whole universe. I am the undecaying Supreme Self. There is neither past nor future apart from me' — reflect in this manner.

9. 'Everything is the One Brahman, pure Consciousness, the Self of all, indivisible and immutable' reflect in this manner.

10. 'There is neither I nor any other thing. Only Brahman exists always full of bliss everywhere.' — meditate on this calmly.

11. The sense of perceiver and perceived is common to all embodied beings, but the Yogi worships the One Self.

## CHAPTER NINE

# EXPOSITION OF THE SELF

1. When this assemblage of body, senses, etc. acts of its own accord there arises an idea 'I am this.' This is the *jiva* (ego) stained by the dirt of ignorance.

2. When the conviction that everything is the space-like (*i.e.* all pervasive) Consciousness becomes firm the *jiva* comes to an end like a lamp without oil.

3. Like a misguided Brahmin, who abandons his own nobility, and adopts the life of a *Sudra*, the Lord assumes the role of the *jiva*.

4. Just as a child sees an apparition (created by its own fancy), so also the stupid *jiva* creates, on account of delusion, this unreal body and sees it (as separate from him).

5. A child superimposes a (real) elephant on a clay elephant and plays with it; even so, an ignorant man superimposes the body, etc., on the Self and carries on his activities.

6. The picture of a snake does not cause fear of a snake when it is realised to be only a picture. Similarly

when the *jiva*-snake is clearly understood there is neither misery nor the cause of misery.

7. The snake superimposed on a garland merges in it; so also the sense of separateness rising from the Self merges in the Self.

8. Although bracelets, etc. appear to be many, as gold they are one. Similarly although the adjuncts are many, the Self is really one.

9. Like the organs of the body and modifications of clay (*i.e.* vessels of clay) non-duality appears as duality (*i.e.* multiplicity) in the form of the moving and unmoving objects.

10. Just as a single face is reflected as many in a crystal, in water, or in ghee or in a mirror; so also the (one) Self is reflected in the (many) intellects (or minds).

11. Just as the sky is (*i.e.* appears to be) stained by dust, smoke and clouds, so also the pure Self in contact with the qualities of maya is (*i.e.* appears to be) soiled by them.

12. Just as metal in contact with fire acquires the quality of fire (namely heat), so also the senses, etc. in contact with the Self acquire the quality of the Self.

13. Just as the invisible Rahu becomes visible when it is seized by the moon (*i.e.*, comes in contact with the moon), even so the Self is known by experiencing objects of perception.

14. When water and fire come together they acquire the qualities of each other. Even so when the Self and the inert body come together the Self looks like the non-Self and the non-Self looks like the Self.

15. Just as fire thrown into a large sheet of water loses its quality, so also Consciousness in contact with the unreal and the inert seems to lose its real nature and becomes inert.

16. The Self is realised in the body only with effort, like sugar from the sugarcane, oil from sesame seeds, fire from wood, butter from a cow and iron from stones (*i.e.* ore).

17. Like the sky seen in an unbroken crystal, the Supreme Lord of the nature of consciousness is seen (*i.e.* exists) in all objects.

18. Just as a big lamp kept inside a vessel made of precious stones illumines by its light both outside and inside, so also the one Self illumines (everything).

19. Just as the sun's reflection in a mirror illumines (other things), so also the reflection of the Self in pure intellects illumines (other things).

20. That in which this wonderful universe appears like a snake in a rope is the eternal luminous Self.

21. The Self is without beginning or end. It is immutable Existence and Consciousness. It manifests

space, it is the source of the *jiva* and higher than the highest.

22. The Self is pure Consciousness, eternal, omnipresent, immutable and self-effulgent like the light of the sun.

23. The omnipresent Self, the substratum of all, is non-different from the effulgent Consciousness like heat from fire. It can only be experienced (not known).

24. Pure Consciousness without intellect, the Supreme Self, the illuminator of all, the indivisible, pervading (everything) within and without, is the firm support (of all).

25. The Self is absolute Consciousness. It is pure awareness, undecaying, free from all ideas of acceptance or rejection and not limited by space, time or genus.

26. Just as the air in the universe pervades everything, so also the Self, the Lord, abides bodiless (in everything).

27. The Consciousness which exists in the expanse of earth, in the ornaments, in the sky and in the sun, exists also inside the worms lying in their shells under the earth.

28. There is neither bondage nor liberation, neither duality nor non-duality. There is only Brahman always shining as Consciousness.

29. Awareness is Brahman; the world is Brahman; the various elements are Brahman; I am Brahman; my enemy is Brahman; my friends and relatives are Brahman.

30. The idea of a consciousness and an object of consciousness is bondage; freedom from it is liberation. Consciousness, the object of consciousness and everything else is the Self; this is the gist of all systems of philosophy.

31. There is only consciousness here; this universe is nothing but consciousness; you are consciousness; I am consciousness; the worlds are consciousness - that is the conclusion.

32. That which exists and that which shines (*i.e.* is known to exist) are all the Self; anything else which seems to shine does not (really) exist. Consciousness alone shines by itself. Ideas of knower and known are idle postulates.

# CHAPTER TEN

## NIRVANA

1. Supreme Bliss cannot be experienced through contact of the senses with their objects. The supreme state is that in which the mind is annihilated through one-pointed enquiry.

2. The bliss arising from the contact of the senses with their objects is inferior. Contact with the sense-objects is bondage; freedom from it is liberation.

3. Attain the pure state between existence and non-existence and hold on to it; do not accept or reject the inner or the outer world.

4. Depend always on that true reality between the sentient and the inert which is the infinite space-like heart.

5. The belief in a knower and the known is called bondage. The knower is bound by the known; he is liberated when there is nothing to know.

6. Abandoning the ideas of seer, seen and sight along with latent desires (*vasanas*) of the past, we meditate on that Self which is the primal light that is the basis of sight.

7. We meditate on the eternal Self, the light of lights which lies between the two ideas of existence and non-existence.

8. We meditate on that Self of consciousness, the bestower of the fruits of all our thoughts, the illuminator of all radiant objects and the farthest limit of all accepted objects.

9. We meditate on that immutable Self, our reality, the bliss of which arises in the mind on account of the close contact between the seer and the seen.

10. If one meditates on that state which comes at the end of the waking state and the beginning of sleep, he will directly experience undecaying bliss.

11. The rock-like state in which all thoughts are still and which is different from the waking and dream states, is one's supreme state.

12. Like mud in a mud pot the Supreme Lord who is existence and space-like consciousness and bliss exists everywhere non-separate (from things).

13. The Self shines by itself as the one boundless ocean of consciousness agitated by waves of thought.

14. Just as the ocean is nothing but water the entire world of things is nothing but consciousness filling all the quarters like the infinite space.

15. Brahman and space are alike as to their invisibility, all-pervasiveness and indestructibility, but Brahman is also consciousness.

16. There is only the one waveless and profound ocean of pure nectar, sweet through and through (*i.e.* blissful) everywhere.

17. All this is truly Brahman; all this is Atman. Do not cut up Brahman into 'I am one thing' and 'this is another.'

18. As soon as it is realised that Brahman is all-pervasive and indivisible this vast samsara is found to be the Supreme Lord.

19. One who realises that everything is Brahman truly becomes Brahman; who would not become immortal if he were to drink nectar?

20. If you are wise you would become this (Brahman) by such conviction; if not, even if you are repeatedly told it would be (useless like offerings) thrown on ashes.

21. Even if you have known the real truth you have to practise always. Water will not become clear by merely uttering the word *kataka* fruit.

22. If one has the firm conviction 'I am the Supreme Self called the undecaying Vasudeva' he is liberated; otherwise he remains bound.

23. After eliminating everything as 'not this', 'not this', the Supreme Being (*lit.* state) which cannot be eliminated remains. Think 'I am That' and be happy.

24. Know always that the Self is Brahman, one and whole. How can that which is indivisible be divided into

'I am the meditator' and 'the other is the object of meditation'?

25. When one thinks 'I am pure consciousness' it is called meditation and when even the idea of meditation is forgotten it is samadhi.

26. The constant flow of mental concepts relating to Brahman without the sense of 'I' achieved through intense practice of Self Enquiry (*jnana*) is what is called *samprajnata samadhi* (meditation with concepts).

27. Let violent winds which characterise the end of aeons (kalpas) blow; let all the oceans unite, let the twelve suns burn (simultaneously), still no harm befalls one whose mind is extinct.

28. That consciousness which is the witness of the rise and fall of all beings, know that to be the immortal state of supreme bliss.

29. Every moving or unmoving thing whatsoever is only an object visualised by the mind. When the mind is annihilated duality (*i.e.* multiplicity) is not perceived.

30. That which is immutable, auspicious and tranquil, that in which this world exists, that which manifests itself as the mutable and immutable objects - that is the sole consciousness.

31. Before discarding the slough the snake regards it as itself, but when once it has discarded it in its hole it does not look upon it as itself any longer.

32. He who has transcended both good and evil does not, like a child, refrain from prohibited acts from a sense of sin, nor does he do what is prescribed from a sense of merit.

33. Just as a statue is contained in a pillar (*i.e.* block) even if it is not actually carved out, so also the world exists in Brahman. Therefore the Supreme State is not a void.

34. Just as a pillar is said to be devoid of the statue when it has not actually been carved out, so also Brahman is said to be void when it is devoid of the impression of the world.

35. Just as still water may be said to contain or not contain ripples, so also Brahman may be said to contain or not contain the world. It is neither void nor existence.